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Review of Hans Reiss, editor, Kant, Political Writings (1991)

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philosophers reach different prescriptive conclusions; and a shared range of evidence is reassuring to the Natural Law proponent.

Speaking of P's royal court appointments, S finds him 'always eager to serve the stronger monarch' (11), and indeed P dismissed any claim to greater liberty or naturalness in democracy or aristocracy with the rather cavalier remark that all regimes enforce obedience to law (119-20). Still, he hailed the British Glorious Revolution, rejected as irrational taking 'an uncertain fear of the future as a pretext for threatening certain and present evil against another' (130), and found it 'intolerable insolence' to interpret 'the Greek doctrine of natural slavery' as a 'right to subdue others like wild game or...drag them into slavery against their will' (125).

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Hans Reiss, ed.

Kant's Political Writings.

New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Second edition. Translated by H.B. Nisbet.

Pp. xv + 309.

US\$44.50 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-39185-7);

US\$14.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-39837-1).

This collection of the political writings of Kant is part of the new Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought. The much-used first edition of 1970 has been enlarged by three additional Kant selections (with helpful editorial introductions), as well as by a postscript and expanded bibliography by Reiss. The additional Kant selections are 'What is Orientation in Thinking?', 'Conjectures on the Beginning of Human History', and two reviews of Herder's *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*. The selections retained from the first edition are 'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose'; 'An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?"'; 'On the Common Saying: "This May Be True in Theory, but It Does Not Apply in Practice"'; *Perpetual Peace*; selections from the *Doctrine of Right* (Part I of *The Metaphysics of Morals*); 'A Renewed Attempt to Answer the Question: "Is the Human Race Continually Improving?"' (Part II of *The Contest of Faculties*); and a one-page selection from *Critique of Pure Reason* on the practical significance of the idea of the perfect constitution. Reiss has also retained his long introduction to the first edition, covering the historical background and main ideas of Kant's political philosophy.

The three additional Kant selections illustrate that during the past twenty years a broadened understanding of Kant's political thought has emerged within Anglo-American philosophy. Notably, under the influence of, among others, Yirmiahu Yovel, Kant's philosophy of history is now commonly seen as integral to his political thought, while Hans Saner, Hannah Arendt, Ronald Beiner, and, more recently Onora O'Neill, have made prevalent the view that the *First* and *Third Critiques* belong — in a sense — to Kant's political work because they significantly address (among other political topics) the nature and importance of the public use of reason. Reiss discusses this issue in his Postscript, the part of his anthology that is of greatest interest to scholars of Kant's political thought. The issue is also central to 'What is Orientation in Thinking?'

Some other topics of the Postscript are 'Property as the Basis of the Legal Order', 'Morality and Politics', and 'Kant and the French Revolution'. Reiss embraces the view that there is no inconsistency between Kant's rejection of the right of active resistance or revolution and his claim that the enthusiasm of the spectators of the French Revolution is a sign of moral progress. On Reiss's account, the two claims are compatible in that the enthusiasm of the spectators concerns only the republican *aims* of the revolution, not the political struggle itself. The argument fails, I think, because Kant's prediction that the enthusiasm of the spectators 'assures' future progress presupposes that the spectators, like the revolutionaries, will sooner or later *act* on their republican aims. Reiss also poses the question whether Kant's rejection of the right of rebellion is still justifiable considering twentieth-century totalitarianism, especially Nazism. One way of defending Kant is to argue that the totalitarian state involves, in effect, a return to the state of nature so that '[i]ndividual self-help, another ideal of the Enlightenment, becomes the order of the day' (264-5). Reiss himself rejects the argument, stating that 'it could apply only if all authority had genuinely ceased to exist and anarchy actually prevailed. (Usually, of course, totalitarian states are particularly authoritarian and thus, at least on the surface, anything but anarchic.)' (265). This conclusion is drawn too quickly, for it is based on an overly narrow view of the state of nature as anarchy rather than as also comprising systematic arbitrary coercion. Yet, it is hard to disagree with Reiss's overall conclusion that 'the problem of the right of revolution cannot be settled within the framework of Kant's political thought' (267).

A final topic of the Postscript is 'Kant's Argument Against World Government'. Reiss shares and emphasizes Kant's worry that a world government would be antithetical to diversity and individual freedom. He neglects to stress here that Kant also recognized that peace is unstable without world government. Kant's federation of states is a compromise necessitated by the 'unsocial sociability' of states and humans. Recent political events underline the depth of Kant's view, as well as the courageous hope behind his proposal.

For new students of Kant's political philosophy, Reiss's new edition is very helpful in offering an accessible but thorough editorial introduction to Kant's political thought; a fairly comprehensive selection of Kant's political work;

and an up-to-date, detailed bibliography. The main shortcoming was and remains that the selection from the *Doctrine of Right* is too limited in not covering Kant's theory of property. This shortcoming has become, however, more bearable now that Cambridge University Press has just published a much needed *complete* translation (by Mary Gregor) of *The Metaphysics of Morals*.

Reiss wrote in his 1970 introduction that 'Kant should be accorded a prominent place in the history of Western political thought, a place which has far too long been denied to him. He ought to be ranked among the leading political thinkers of all times' (39). Reiss's 1991 Postscript and bibliography make it abundantly clear that Kant has at last received this deserved recognition within the English-speaking world (cf. 250).

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Byron M. Roth and John D. Mullen
Decision-Making: Its Logic and Practice.
Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield 1991. Pp.
xiii + 419.
US\$34.00. ISBN 0-8476-7619-6.

Decision-Making is an introduction to decision theory in a broad sense, designed as an elementary textbook for courses in philosophy, psychology, business and political science. I will review it from the perspective of the philosophy curriculum. This book emphasizes the practical. Both the Preface and Introduction open with promises 'to improve the way you think about decisions' (1). While this pragmatism raises some philosophical questions, to which I shall return at the end, it is well served by the book's two didactic methods: reviews of studies of empirical decision-making and formal methods for normative decision-making.

Three chapters catalog various causes of errors in practical reasoning. Chapter 2, Psychological Impediments to Sound Decision-Making, is a broad survey, covering topics like groupthink and stress, including Tversky and Kahneman's fascinating empirical studies of the framing effect. Chapter 4 is an excellent introduction to the pitfalls of reasoning about probability. Chapter 5, Reasoning about Causes, covers more controversial ground, including Sowell's appeal to demographic differences to undermine claims that discrimination causes differences in wealth. The material covered in these diagnostic chapters is interesting social science. I would prefer to see it treated more scientifically. Students are ill-served by an approach that